

MEMORY INTRUSION PROTECTION CIRCUIT

ABSTRACT

An electronic signal processing apparatus contains a security key memory. Unless the security key memory contains a prescribed security key, a user is unable to operate the electronic signal processing apparatus. An intrusion detection and protection mechanism prevents access to the security key in the event of a compromise in the integrity of a housing for the security key memory. For this purpose, an intrusion detection circuit is adapted to monitor the integrity of the housing. A memory contents modification circuit is operative, in response to the intrusion detection circuit detecting a compromise in the integrity of the housing (opening of the housing), to modify (e.g., scramble) the contents of the security key memory and thereby effectively remove the security key from the security key memory.